

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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USIA-06 EB-07 AID-05 AGR-05 OMB-01 COME-00 /072 W

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R 201328Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5282

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JURUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0407

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG

SUBJ: NEW ISRAELI ACTIVITY IN RAFAH JUNCTION AREA

1. ISRELI PRESS THIS WEEK REPORTS NEW CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY AROUND APPROACHES TO RAFAH JUNCTION, SOUTH OF GAZA, AS RESULT OF REPORTED TOP LEVEL GOI DECISION TO ACCELERATE PACE OF SETTLEMENT IN THAT AREA. ARTICLES MAKE SPECIFIC MENTION OF ACTIVITY AT NAHAL SINAI AND AT TWO NEW SITES, OGDA AND SUKKOT. FOLLOWING ARE DETAILS AS REPORTED IN JERUSALEM POST.

2. AT NAHAL SINAI, JEWISH NATIONAL FUND (JNF) HAS BEEN COMMISSIONED TO PREPARE INFRASTRUCTURE AT SITE EAST RPT EAST OF EL ARISH. EVENTUAL PLAN IS TO MOVE NAHAL SINAI TO THIS NEW SITE FROM ITS PRESENT LOCATION SEVERAL KILOMETERS WEST OF THE TOWN. UNIDENTIFIED ISRAELI "OFFICIALS" SAY THIS INDICATES "POSSIBLE" GOI READINESS TO GIVE UP EL ARISH IN CONTEXT OF FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT, WITH NEW NAHAL SINAI THEN MARKING FURTHEST POINT OF ISRAELI

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CONTROL ON MEDITERRANEAN COAST. IT IS INTENDED THAT NAHAL

SINAI WILL CONCENTRATE ON "SERVICE INDUSTRIES" RATHER THAN ON FARMING. THE HERUT-AFFILIATED SETTLEMENT IS EXPECTED TO OPERATE A LAUNDRY FOR ENTIRE IDF SOUTHERN COMMAND AND TO DEVELOP TOURIST FACILITIES IN AREA.

3. OGDA IS TO BE MOSHAV ON 1,000-DUNAM SITE NOW BEING PREPARED BY JNF. (ACCORDING TO ROUGH MAP IN JERUSALEM POST, LOCATION IS SEVERAL KILOMETERS SOUTHWEST OF NETIV ASARA.) CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN BY END OF FEBRUARY, WITH FIRST FIFTY FAMILIES MOVING IN BY SUMMER OF 1976 IN FIRST OF TWO SETTLEMENT STAGES. EVENTUAL PLAN IS FOR OGDA TO ENCOMPASS 100 FARMS, EACH HAVING OWN GREENHOUSE IN WHICH TO GROW PRODUCE FOR OFF SEASON EXPORT TO EUROPE. THE SETTLEMENT IS ALSO SCHEDULED TO PRODUCE TURKEYS AND OPERATE A MANGO ORCHARD.

4. RE SUKKOT, PRESS REPORTS ONLY THAT SITE PREPARATION HAS BEGUN NEAR EXISTING MOSHAVIM SADOT I AND SADOT II.

5. THREE ADDITIONAL NEW SITES: ARE REPORTEDLY ON DRAWING BOARD: NAHAL MESURA, DEKEL, ESHEL, APPARENTLY TO BE LOCATED WITHIN KILOMETER OR TWO OF EACH OTHER AND RUNNING IN SOUTHWESTERLY LINE FROM NETIV ASARA IN ORDER LISTED.

6. COMMENT: WE HOPE TO VISIT AREA OVER NEXT FEW WEEKS TO GIVE ABOVE INFORMATION THOROUGH ON-SITE CHECK. IN MEANTIME, PRESS PLAY GIVEN RAFAH DEVELOPMENTS, COMING ON HEELS OF GOI DECISION TO PROCEED WITH DEVELOPMENT OF MAALE ADUMIM (TEL AVIV 234) ON WEST BANK, FOR TIME BEING SHOULD MORE THAN SATISFY THOSE POLITICAL ELEMENTS FAVORING INCREASED JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. REPORTED MOVE OF NAHAL SINAI TO NEW LOCATION EAST OF EL ARISH IS INTRIGUING, BUT AS YET WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF POSSIBLE GOI RATIONALE OTHER THAN SPECULATION CITED PARA 2 ABOVE.
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